A

SERMON,

DELIVERED, MAY 23, 1804,

IN THE

BAPTIST MEETING-HOUSE, GOLD-STREET,

NEW-YORK;

AT THE

ORDINATION

OF THE

REV. JEREMIAH CHAPLIN.

BY THOMAS BALDWIN, D. D.

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A SERMON, &c.

DANIEL XII. 3.

They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever.

No sentiment in the Bible is more fully established, than the original apostacy of man. The gospel is a proclamation of pardon to the penitent; and as this is to be preached to every creature, it proceeds entirely upon the supposition that all mankind are guilty. Much ingenuity, however, has been displayed, inattempting to prove that man retains all the perfection which he possessed when he first came out of the hands of his Creator.

It has been argued, that to admit the doctrine of universal depravity, would be to impeach the wisdom and goodness of God. But will it not impeach the divine perfections in a still higher degree, to suppose that man was at first created with all the evil propensities, and moral deformities which now disgrace his character? Or are these to be attributed wholly to the influence of example and habit? That evil communications corrupt good manners, will be readily admit-

ted. Yet to deny the existence of original hereditary depravity, and calculate the whole turpitude of all the moral evil which is found in the world, upon the influence of education, example and habit, would be to render their influence more cont agious than the plague, and more fatal than the midnight pestilence: For amidst the greatest ravages of these, some have intirely escaped. But the contagion of sin is universal: "There is not a just man that liveth and sinneth not." This is a rule which admits of no exception; for "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

How unlike must we suppose the present state of man, to that in which he was at first created! He was *then* innocent and blessed, but is *now* guilty and wretched. His residence was then fixed by his benificent Creator, in the blissful Garden of Eden. There neithor pain nor sorrow had ever been felt, nor the voice of distress heard. But no sooner had he rebelled, than he was driven out by the sword of justice, into a dreary world, cursed for his sin, and where his path in every direction was beset with briars and thorns.

If it were possible in his first happy state, to have experienced a momentary want, it was only to prepare a relish for the enjoyment which succeeded. Here every fruit which could please

the taste, secure health, and prolong existence, spontaneously furnished his daily repast.

But amidst all this luxury of bliss, Heaven saw fit as a test of his loyalty, to impose one restraint, and one only. The tree in the midst of the Garden he is forbidden to touch on pain of death. But alas! unhappy man, thou being in honor didst not abide! O Adam, I blush for thy folly and weakness! How suddenly and awfully is thy glory changed! What misery and wretchedness hast thou brought upon thyself, and on thy hapless race! Cheerful innocence no longer smiles in thy countenance, and joy ceaseth to play around thy heart. What *fearful looking for of judgment*, hath already disquieted thy once peaceful breast! What dreadful apprehensions of *wrath to come*, fill thy soul with terror and amazment!

In this moment of awful suspence, as this fatal day was drawing to a close, imagine you behold a dark cloud arising, which suddenly involves the setting sun. In an instant the red lightnings blaze through the wide expanse, and thunders portentious of his approaching fate, rock the solid world! Poor man! how he trembles in his fig-leaves! At length the Almighty speaks, and thus addresses the guilty offender—"*Adam, where art thou?*" The voice of Omnipotence

thrills through his shivering soul. The crimson fluid congeals in all its channels, and, for a while, the heart nearly forgets to palpitate.

In this dread state of terror and confusion, who would have expected any thing less than a full and open disclosure of his crime, attended with humble penitential confessions of guilt. But, instead of this, he attempts to extenuate his rebellion by the most pitiful evasions. Astonishing impiety! What! dare still to insult thy offended Maker?——Ye ministers of almighty vengeance! Ye vindictive thunders, which drove the sinning angels from their seats in bliss, down to the regions of rayless night, what goodness interposed! What potent arm arrested your fury, that you did not instantly drive rebellious man to the gloomy centre? O, it was that heavenly Lamb, it was the compassionate Saviour, my brethren, who interposed in behalf of our guilty race, and undertook the arduous work of our redemption.

It was Christ who pledged himself to his divine Father, to repair the honors of his injured law; to make a complete atonement for sin, and bring his rebellious people to a cordial submission to the great plan of mercy. Had it not been for this wondrous method of recovery, the whole human race must have inevitably perished.

The principles and effects of the apostacy were every where to be seen: for instead of being governed by right reason, the sinful propensities and passions reign. Instead of that supreme love to God, which is the duty and happiness of all rational beings, the heart is alienated from him, and occupied by a sordid self-love; and its affections placed on unsatisfactory and forbidden objects.

Thus estranged from God, and far off from righteousness we had forever remained, but for the precious grace of the gospel. This grace, wonderful as it is, is rejected by thousands, and would be by all, were it not accompanied by a divine influence.

With a view, therefore, to carry into effect this gracious plan of redemption, and to recover guilty men from the ways of sin and death, to the love of righteousness, God has been pleased to establish the ministry of reconciliation—to raise up, to qualify, and call some of our brethren to publish this salvation, and to honor them as the happy instruments of *turning many from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to the living God.*

Without making any particular remarks upon the context, we shall proceed to deduce from the words first read, a few observations upon the

character, the *work*, and the *reward* of a faithful minister of Jesus Christ.

Our first proposition is founded upon this member of the text. "They that be wise."—Which implies, that no others can successfully engage in this important work. But we will attempt to explain what is meant in the text by being wise.

1. To be *wise*, according to the common acceptation of the word in the sacred *scriptures*, is to be really good; or, in other words, to be truly religious. Wisdom and folly are the terms chosen by the wise son of David to characterize the virtuous and the vicious. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding. But fools*, that is, wicked persons, *hate knowledge;* they *make a mock at sin.* Our blessed Saviour makes use of the same figure of speech when characterizing saints and sinners. The former he calls *wise virgins*, and the latter, *foolish.*

If we view the subject in a proper light, we shall find it difficult to conceive, how a man could act more foolishly or impiously, than to attempt to teach and lead mankind into the knowledge of a religi on, which he has no experimental knowledge of himself. With what propriety could he urge the importance of religion

upon others, while his conduct furnished evidence from day to day, that he himself lived in the neglect of it. Those who seek for religious instruction, have an undoubted right to expect that such as undertake to be teachers of others, have themselves been made "*wise unto salvation*, through faith which is in Jesus Christ."

2. A minister ought to be wise in the *common* acceptation of the word. That is, he ought to be prudent, discreet, and judicious. The want of this wisdom would render the greatest talents useless, if not dangerous. We are willing to allow that God has often chosen *foolish things*, such as were so at least in the world's estimation, *to confound the wise*. But it will not hence follow, that these persons were not endued with much spiritual wisdom.

That God has often made use of instruments which to appearance were very unpromising, and by crowning their labours with great success has confounded the pride and vanity of others, we readily acknowledge. But these persons were undoubtedly fitted, in a very special manner, for the work to which they were called. "He that winneth souls is wise."

I believe it has often been observed, that some men for a time have been useful, and yet, for the want of that "wisdom which dwelleth with

prudence," they have afterwards fallen into those indiscretions, which have probably done as much injury to the cause of Christ, as their former zeal did good. When this is the case, every feeling heart will exclaim, in the language of Moses, *O that they were wise.* Perceiving the danger which would be likely to arise to the Church of God, from the want of this wisdom, St. Paul directed Timothy not to introduce into the ministry a *novice;* one whose inexperience and want of prudence, might expose himself to the wiles of Satan; and the cause of religion to many reproaches from its enemies. *Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves.* This was a part of the solemn charge given by our Saviour to his disciples.

3. There is one idea more, which seems to be implied in this expression. I hardly know how to distinguish it, unless I call it *ministerial* wisdom.

By this we do not mean either subtlety or guile, or that worldly wisdom, which manifests itself in *handling the word of God deceitfully,* in order to avoid giving offence to those who are opposed to the soul-humbling doctrines of the gospel. But by it we understand a kind of heavenly wisdom, by which the heart is inspired and qualified for the work. *Bazaleel* and *Aholiab*

were inspired by the Spirit of God, to assist Moses in the work of the tabernacle. Their talents were peculiarly adapted and disposed to the service to which they were called. So are the ministers of Christ. Their hearts indite good matter, and their tongues are as the pen of a ready writer. Though aptness to teach may be considered as a natural gift, rather than a spiritual endowment, yet it is rendered eminently useful, when directed and guided by this heavenly wisdom.

They who are wise* in this sense, avail themselves of all opportunities of doing good to the souls committed to their charge. They carefully notice the dispensations of divine providence, and piously *regard the operation of his hand.* They study to accommodate their public discourses, as well as their private conversation, to the particular circumstances of their hearers. In this way they divide the word aright, and give to every one a portion of meat in due season. And happy, indeed, is that man, whose instructions are followed with a blessing, and who is made the honored instrument of winning many over to the love of virtue and righteousness. From these observations we are led,

* They that be *wise.* This word, by some who are allowed to be critics in the Hebrew is rendered "They that instruct." (Emerudientes, Junius.) By others, "They that be teachers." Pool in loc.

1. To consider the work in which the ministers of Christ are engaged. This is expressed in the text, by *turning many to righteousness.*

There are some things implied in this part of the subject, which are not expressed. As 1. It is implied, that men, considered as sinners, are destitute of that righteousness which the law requires, and which the gospel alone can invest them with.

It is highly probable that our ideas of that transient state of happiness in which our great progenitors were at first placed, are very imperfect. The scriptures, which furnish all the light we have upon this subject, inform us, of little more than that "God made man upright, but he has sought out many inventions." By transgressing the law of his Creator, he divested himself of his original righteousness, and became obnoxious to divine displeasure.

2. It is not only implied, that men are destitute of a righteousness which can justify them before God, but there is a want of love, yea, a criminal aversion in them to it. This will appear, if we consider the means which are employed in order to turn them to righteousness. If there were no aversion in men to righteousness, whenever exhibited they would embrace

it. Means considered as persuasives to it, would be unnecessary ; if not wholly so, would not so often prove unsuccessful. A very great proportion of those who statedly enjoy the administration of the gospel, remain, after all, opposed to its doctrines and precepts, and consequently uninterested in its promises and blessings.

With a view to recover men to the love of righteousness, such means have been appointed, as to infinite wisdom appeared to be best adapted to the purpose. These means are often unsuccessful, and would always prove so, were it not for a divine influence which accompanies them. If there were no opposition in the human heart to what is right and fit, divine influence would be wholly unnecessary. Having thus shewn what is implied, we are prepared

3. To consider what is expressed in this part of our subject.

The principal end of all religious instruction is, to recover men from the ruins of the apostasy, to the love of righteousness. In this way only can they be prepared for the everlasting glories, and uncloying felicities of the heavenly state. But will religious instructions effect this? Can ministers change the hearts of their hearers? They certainly cannot. Yet when a divine influence accompanies their instructions, the work

is easily accomplished. Though of themselves they are weak and can do nothing, yet they have sufficient encouragement to engage believingly in the work, from the gracious promise of Christ; "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." Under the strong impressions of the love of God, and a deep and solemn sense of duty, they devote themselves to this laborious, self-denying service.

The first preachers of the gospel, had to contend with principalities and powers, with the rulers of the darkness of this world; yet they were neither clothed with civil authority, nor protected by it. And although the weapons of their warfare were not carnal, they were mighty through God to the pulling down of the strong-holds of sin. Truth alone, the pure doctrine of the *Cross*, has in all ages been succeeded and blest, to the conversion of sinners. God has graciously accompanied the word of salvation, with a secret, but powerful energy to the hearts of thousands and millions. Truth, though it may seem slow in its operation, will finally prevail and triumph. It has hitherto made its way and triumphed over every obstacle which either ignorance, prejudice, or superstition, could oppose to its progress. Armed with the *sword of the spirit*, which is the word

of God, the ministers of righteousness have proceeded from conquering to conquer. The triumphs of christianity, are the triumphs of virtue and reason over ignorance and vice: they are therefore, not marked with devastation and blood; but peace, righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost, have been the invariable effects of submission. This was seen in Samaria when the gospel was published there, and the people were rescued from the delusions of the sorcerer. *There was great joy in that city.*

But in order to account upon rational principles for the great and continued success of the gospel, we shall be led to consider the leading sentiments which have been brought to view and insisted on in evangelical preaching.

The gospel exhibits the whole series of a vast system, devised by infinite wisdom before the foundation of the world, for the recovery of lost sinners. In this are unfolded the character of God as moral governor of the world; the character of man as an intelligent, depraved, dependant, yet accountable creature; the Supreme Deity, and complete atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ; the offices and influence of the Holy Spirit, in renewing and sanctifying the people of God; the final perseverance of saints in holiness; the everlasting happiness of

the righteous in the world to come, and the future endless punishment of the ungodly. These sentiments stand connected, and follow each other.

To place the subject in a more concise view. The intire moral depravity of man, and restoration to righteousness and to God, through the mediation of Jesus Christ, are principal, or leading objects in the gospel salvation.

It will not, I presume, be necessary to go into a full explanation of moral depravity. It may be sufficient to remark, that it consists radically in the want of a right temper or disposition of heart, and not in any degree of intellectual deficiency. Where it prevails and reigns, the heart is always destitute of every right affection towards God, and, by a fixed, yet voluntary bias, inclined wholly to that which is sinful.

The method of recovery which is offered up through the atonement and righteousness of the great Mediator, is, by "*repentance* towards God, and *faith* in our Lord Jesus Christ." This is the only way in which the gospel saves sinners. It is not merely forming correct notions respecting the doctrines of religion, but imbibing its spirit, which constitutes the man a Christian. A person may have a very orthodox head, and at the same time possess an impeni-

tent heart. We hence find that John Baptist, our Lord himself, and his apostles, constantly urged their hearers to repentance. This was their language: "*Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*"* "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: *repent* ye, and *believe* the gospel."† "O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision; but shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles that they should *repent* and *turn* to God, and do works meet for repentance."‡ This is a true, though very brief specimen of primitive preaching.

If men must be *turned to righteousness* in order to be saved, they must be turned from sin; and this can be effected in no other way, than by repentance. If there be any connexion between the means employed and the end sought for, we shall easily perceive the propriety of addressing sinners on the subject of repentance.

That there is an established connexion between the means and the end, it is believed few will deny. Without admitting this principle, no event which is now future could be calculated

* Matt. iii. 2. and iv. 17. † Mark i. 15. ‡ Acts xxvi. 19, 20.

upon with the least degree of certainty, or even probability. Give up this sentiment, and the merchant could have no inducement to freight his ship, nor the husbandman to sow his field. But animated with the prospect of a prosperous voyage, and a plenteous harvest, each is stimulated to present duty. It must be remembered, however, that although there is an established connexion between the means and the end, yet it is not an infallible connexion. This would be injurious in the highest degree; for it would render us independent of God. The husbandman is bound in duty to sow his field; and he is encouraged to sow in hope: to wait for the early and latter rain, and the appointed weeks of harvest; yet after all he is dependent on the divine blessing for a crop. If because he must be dependent on the blessing of God to succeed his labours, he should refuse to sow, it would be morally certain that he would have nothing to reap.

To apply this reasoning to the subject before us: The ministers of the gospel are sent out with the precious treasure of the word, and they are commanded to sow the seed in the morning, and at evening not to withhold their hand; for they know not which shall prosper, or whether both shall be alike good. By the

ministry of the word, " God now commands all men every where to repent." Although this subject had so repeatedly been brought to view by Christ in his personal ministry; yet some of his immediate disciples seemed to have very contracted ideas of the gospel dispensation. But their divine Master after his resurrection, opened their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures. " Thus" said he " it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that REPENTANCE AND REMISSION OF SINS SHOULD BE PREACHED IN HIS NAME, AMONG ALL NATIONS, beginning at Jerusalem."* If there are any of the disciples of Christ at the present day, who are in the dark with respect to this part of their duty, we pray the great Head of the Church to open their understandings, so that they may declare faithfully the whole counsel of God.

Some, arguing from the moral inability of the sinner to that which is good, have supposed it absurd and inconsistent to call on him to repent. But it must be remembered, that this inability arises wholly from disinclination to that which is right. Will any pretend that this is a

* Luke xxiv, 46, 47.

sufficient excuse for not loving God? Or for not repenting and believing the gospel? These are commanded duties, and no other reason can be assigned for their neglect, but the total opposition of the heart. This indeed is the only thing which leaves them without excuse. If it be the duty of sinners to repent, then ministers ought to urge it upon them as such. If it be not their duty to repent, it will be difficult to conceive how they can be to blame for living impenitent.

If it be not the sinner's duty to repent, why should we attempt to alarm him, by telling him of his lost and wretched condition? Of what avail to tell him that he is under the curse of a violated law? That his feet stand on slippery places, and that "fiery billows roll below?" If it be not his immediate duty to escape from the impending danger, why torment him before the time? It will be equally unavailing to tell him of what Christ has done for the salvation of sinners; for he can have no interest in this, so long as he remains impenitent.

If to evade the force of these observations, it should be objected, that the sinner's heart is so entirely depraved, and his opposition so fixed against truth and holiness, that he never will repent, unless brought to it by the influences

of the divine Spirit, it will be granted. But it will be asked, whether his entire opposition to what is right and fit, excuses him from the duty of repentance? If so, he must be excused from blame; and in this way we may exclude all blame from the universe.

Should it be further objected, that God "hath exalted his Son to be a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins;" and therefore it would be improper to call on sinners to repent, until this grace is bestowed upon them. To this it may be answered, that this is the very way in which God usually gives repentance, by accompanying the faithful addresses of his ministers to their consciences, by the influences of the Holy Spirit.

It is not easy to conceive how a minister can adopt the language of the apostle, "I am pure from the blood of all men," unless he has faithfully and constantly warned them to repent, and escape from the wrath to come by embracing the Saviour. As a faithful spiritual watchman, he must certainly see the sword coming; and if he does not warn the wicked and he is taken away in his wickedness, will not his blood be required at the watchman's hand? Neither then the moral impotency of the sinner, nor the eternal purpose of God, nor the necessity of the

Spirit's influence to change his heart, ought to be considered as the smallest objection to this duty. Like the prophet, he is bidden to *prophesy over the dry bones.* Their *exceeding dryness,* forms no sufficient objection. While addressing them as commanded, the Spirit of life may enter them, and they may become true penitents. Here the preacher discharges his duty, the Holy Spirit performs his office, the sinner receives the impressions of truth, and his heart is moulded into the temper of the gospel. Here God's revealed will is obeyed, and his eternal purpose according to the "election of grace" made manifest, by a sovereign application of pardon to the guilty.

Those who would wish to see their efforts succeeded in turning many to righteousness, must copy after the primitive preachers. They must remember, that like their divine Master, they are *not sent to call the righteous; but sinners to repentance.* Thus to be employed in recovering poor, guilty creatures to the forfeited favour of God, how blessed the work! how glorious the prospect!

But we must proceed, briefly, in the third place, to consider the reward promised to faithful, successful teachers.

They shall shine as the firmament, and as the stars forever and ever.

It seems most congenial with the spirit of the gospel to suppose, that God will reward his faithful servants according to their fidelity, rather than according to the success attending their labours. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." He who gained two talents by occupying two, was as completely blessed, as he who gained five by occupying the same number.

The man who is called of God, and who conscientiously and faithfully devotes his time and talents to this important service, will not go unrewarded. He may often feel much discouraged from the want of success in his labours; but he should remember, that though he now sows in tears, he shall hereafter reap in joy.

"They that be wise," they that instruct many, "shall shine as the firmament." They shall shine in the church on earth in the beauteous lustre of grace, and in the world to come in all the splendors of glory and immortality.

Every faithful minister is a star, lighted up and placed in the church by Christ; and he that walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks holds them in his right hand. Like John the Baptist, many of them are burning and shining

lights. They shine, indeed, in borrowed rays; for in themselves they are opaque bodies: but by being placed in the firmament of the church, and illuminated by grace divine, they receive and reflect the rays of the Sun of righteousness.

The declaration in the text is not to be understood as a promise of earthly splendor and greatness. The very best of men may be despised, and even persecuted by the world, and yet by their doctrine and example shine in the view of all holy beings, of all such as love our Lord Jesus Christ.

The promise is made still more extensive in the last clause of the text. *They that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever.* This, undoubtedly, has reference to the resurrection state, and the glory which is to follow. In that day there will not be one among all the ransomed millions without a wedding garment. All will be adorned with the robes of salvation; yet some will shine with superior lustre. They, who have distinguished themselves in their Lord's service, by their faithful and zealous endeavours to reclaim their fellow men from the error of their ways, and bring them to the unfeigned love of righteousness, shall be honorably rewarded by special tokens of divine approbation.

Although every true minister may be considered as a star in the church of Christ, it must be remembered, that they are not all of equal magnitude, nor do they shine with equal glory. So also it shall be in the resurrection. It is believed, however, that in the resurrection state, when men shall be judged by him, who has a perfect knowledge of the hearts and actions of men, that things will not appear exactly in the order in which they do now. It is hard to believe, that the pious, humble vassal, will then stand at the same forbidding distance from his haughty lord, which he is now obliged to keep. Nor will the *purple*, the *tiàrà*, the *mitre*, nor the *cowl*, give any distinction in that day. The faithful ministers of Christ, who have not counted their lives dear unto them, so that they might finish their course with joy, and the ministry which they have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God; who have been willing to sacrifice their ease, their worldly prospects, and, if it should come in competition, their reputation, yea, and even life also; these shall be honorably distinguished and rewarded in the future world.

The stars which now adorn the spangled firmament, and waste their twinkling rays on the bosom of night, shall, ere long, fade away.

These shall set to rise no more! But the dear servants of Christ, who have faithfully and diligently laboured in turning men to righteousness, *shall shine for ever and ever.* Though they set in death, they will rise again, and shine with increasing glory.

At the last great day, when God shall judge the world by Jesus Christ; when *false teachers* who never made truth their orbit, but were *wandering stars,* to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever," shall receive the due reward of their deeds, then shall the righteous shine forth in the kingdom of their Father, with a lustre which the vast round of eternity shall not diminish. This thought will animate the faithful servants of Christ, amidst the trials of their earthly pilgrimage. Like their divine master, for the "joy which is set before them," they will press through every difficulty and danger; enduring as seeing him who is invisible, having respect unto the recompence of reward. Cheered with this glorious prospect, they may adopt the language of the poet,

"When we've been there ten thousand years,
"All shining like the Sun;
"We've no less days to sing God's praise,
"Than when we first begun."

With what holy confidence did the Apostle exult in the prospect of dissolution? "I am

now ready to be offered, the time of my departure is at hand; I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.—Henceforth there is laid up for me, a crown of righteousness." What immense prospects were opening to him, beyond the vale of death! To be arrayed in the robes of immortality; to wear a crown of righteousness, and to shine as the stars, forever and ever!

We hasten to close the subject with a few words of address.

The candidate for ordination claims our first attention.

Much respected and dear Brother,

You are now about to devote yourself anew, in this public manner, to the service of your divine Lord and Master. The work you are engaged in, though arduous and difficult, is highly honorable. It is an unspeakable privilege to be called out from the world by grace, and adopted into the family of God. But much more, to be called to dispense the gospel to dying men; to be accounted faithful by the great head of the church, and by him to be put into the ministry. This removes every objection of our having run before we are sent.

It affords us much pleasure to reflect, that at an unusually early period of life, you were

brought to a happy acquaintance with religion* —that your faith was of that kind, which works by love, and purifies the heart. Influenced, as we trust, by this holy temper, you were led, publicly and solemnly, to dedicate yourself to God, by an open, visible profession. This you did before many witnesses, and we presume you have never repented it. The blessed Jesus, who watches over the lambs of his flock, who gathers them in his arms and carries them in his bosom, preserved you from the follies and temptations incident to youth. It also affords us additional pleasure to remark, that during your residence at the university where you received your education, the influence of religion upon your temper and conduct, was visible to all your connexions.

Having obtained satisfaction, that the great head of the church hath endowed you with ministerial gifts and qualifications, and committed to you a dispensation of the gospel, we are now to proceed, according to apostolic practice, by prayer and laying on of hands, to separate you to the work to which the Holy Ghost hath called you.

Is it with trembling diffidence, my dear brother, that you now engage in this great work?

* Mr. Chaplin was but about ten years old when he first experienced the power of the gospel. At the age of eleven he made a public profession.

Impressed with a sense of your own weakness and inability, are you ready to exclaim, Who is sufficient for these things? We can only point you to the great Fountain of wisdom and strength. Jesus knows your need of assistance, and will help you at all times, if you put your trust in him. "Lo I am with you alway!" Blessed encouragement! May the Lord help you to realize it, that you may ever go, depending on him for strength.

In all your addresses from the pulpit, endeavour to commend yourself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. The pure doctrines of the gospel, delivered with great plainness of speech, are most likely to do good. You will not study so much to please, as to profit them that hear you. Their improvement in Christian knowledge, their growth in grace, their advancement in piety and holiness, will be objects of your special attention. A great proportion of those who attend upon the ministration of the gospel, are in the class of unbelievers. With a view to *turn them to righteousness*, you will endeavour to shew them, from the word of God, their true characters; the awful depravity of the human heart, and the unavoidable misery which awaits them without repentance. When their consciences are properly awakened, you will

point them to *the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.* Encourage the trembling, doubting believer, with the precious promises of God. Exhort such as have believed through grace, to maintain good works. If you put the brethren in mind of these things, you shall be a good minister of Jesus Christ.

Finally ;—We pray God to bless you, to hold you in his hand, and to make you eminently useful in the church. And after having been the happy instrument of *turning many to righteousness,* may you *shine as the firmament, and as the stars, forever and ever.*

This church of our Lord Jesus Christ will receive our congratulations on the present occasion.

Dear Brethren,

It must be matter of real joy to you, to have our worthy young brother set apart, by solemn ordination, so as to administer special ordinances; although, from the precarious state of his health, he does not take the particular pastoral charge of you. We hope, notwithstanding, that his continuance with you may be prolonged for many years ; and that your happiness and friendship may be mutual. He will often need your advice and assistance, and at all times

your prayers. You will endeavour, therefore, to encourage his heart, and to strengthen his hands. And O that God may bless his labours abundantly to your spiritual comfort and edification. That you may be favored with a time of refreshing, from the presence of the Lord: a day of almighty power; when sinners shall croud these temple gates, and saints flock with willing minds: when additions shall be made daily to this church, of such as shall be saved. May you continue to live in love and peace, and the God of love and peace shall dwell with you.

To conclude:—May this dear congregation at large, be the happy sharers in the grace of the gospel. You will remember, my *dear friends*, that the ministers of Christ address you in the name of their divine master: that they come to you with the messages of his grace and love, Listen, then, to their friendly instructions;—never be offended because they tell you the truth. It is best that you should know your true situation. You will remember, that the great object which they have in view is your good: to turn you to righteousness, so that you may be saved in the great day of the Lord. Those who turn a deaf ear to the instructions of wisdom, who remain *stout-hearted and far from righteousness*, must perish forever. May God,

of his infinite mercy, impress your minds with a deep and solemn sense of these things, and bring you to a cordial submission to the truth; so that you may be clothed and adorned with the spotless righteousness of Christ, and be finally admitted to join the *shining* myriads above, in songs of everlasting praise, to Him who loved and washed us from our sins in his own blood: to whom be glory, in the Church forever,

AMEN.

CHARGE

BY

THE REV. STEPHEN GANO.

AS the part assigned me on the present occasion, is to *give the charge*, you will permit me to observe; that this practice is founded on the Apostle Paul's most solemn and impressive charge given to Timothy as a Minister of our Lord Jesus Christ, in which charge the most important and leading duties of a Christian Minister, are summarily comprised.

It is not expected that by giving a charge, we can confer any essential qualification on the candidate who is thus set apart by prayer, for the administration of the ordinances of the gospel. For it is on the belief that he has already received gifts and grace from the great Head of the church, that we cordially fellowship his discharging the office-work of a minister.

But believing it necessary to "stir up the gifts which may be in us, and to put one another in remembrance of our duties in the different relations we sustain in the world, and espe-

of his infinite mercy, impress your minds with a deep and solemn sense of these things, and bring you to a cordial submission to the truth; so that you may be clothed and adorned with the spotless righteousness of Christ, and be finally admitted to join the *shining* myriads above, in songs of everlasting praise, to Him who loved and washed us from our sins in his own blood: to whom be glory, in the Church forever,

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But believing it necessary to "stir up the gifts which may be in us, and to put one another in remembrance of our duties in the different relations we sustain in the world, and espe-

cially in the church of our Lord Jesus Christ; I will take the liberty, my dear young and respected Brother, to address you in the exalted and inspired language of an Apostle. "I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing and his kingdom, Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine."*

You will observe, my Brother, this comprehensive charge involves your duty as a preacher, the subject-matter of your preaching, and the manner in which you are to demean yourself as a Minister of Christ. "Preach the word;" take this blessed Volume as your guide and directory.† Let plain bible truth be the subject matter of your preaching. From this blessed repository of all necessary doctrinal and practical truth, "the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works." From this word alone must the sheep and lambs of Christ be fed; and it must be dearer to the understanding Christian, than his natural life. For this is the word which reveals immortality and eternal life. A due attention to the simplicity of divine truth, as expressed in the word of God,

* 2 Tim. 4. 1. 2. † The candidate was presented with a Bible.

will guard you against the pride of metaphysical subtleties and sophistry, which only inflate the mind with conjectural ideas, while it is left destitute of the real bread of life.

In preaching the word, you will doubtless perceive some truths of primary importance to the eternal interests of men. These truths will consequently command your first attention, to preach them in their plainness and purity. I charge you to preach the doctrine of divine sovereignty, according to the scriptures; the necessity of being "born again;" "repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ;" the moral depravity of man, that "the carnal mind is enmity against God." You will not shun to "preach Christ crucified," and that it is only by his cross the sinner can receive "a crown of glory." In preaching a Saviour, you will exhibit him as the GOD-MAN-MEDIATOR, in his fullness and offices—in his life and in his death—in his resurrection, ascension, glorification, and present all-prevailing intercession. In the person of Jesus must all the lines of gospel preaching unite and concentrate.

My dear Brother, you have doubtless felt, that no part of our Lord's character can be uninteresting to the child of God. This is the "true bread which came down from heaven."

Evermore, then, in your preaching, feed the flock of God with this bread.

In preaching "Christ Jesus the Lord," I charge you to discriminate between "the precious and the vile." "*Give not that which is holy unto the dogs*," is an injunction of our Divine Master. Distinguish between the clean and the unclean; between them who fear God, and them who fear him not. Support, as an instrument, the weak, and comfort the feeble-minded; teaching them, that those who are united to Jesus, by that "faith which works by love and purifies the heart," shall be "kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation;" that as they are chosen in Christ, bought by his blood, called by his grace, secured by his love and promise, none shall ever "pluck them out of his hand," nor "separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, their Lord."

My Brother,—You will endeavour to solemnly place before your hearers, the important scriptural doctrine of a future judgment, when there will be an eternal separation between the righteous and the wicked; that "the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, to the resurrection of life,

and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation."

I charge you also to preach "that they who have believed in God be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men." And they are necessary for ourselves that we be not unfruitful. Herein is our heavenly Father glorified, that we bring forth much fruit.

You will, also, as a Minister of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, inculcate and practice the ordinances of the gospel, according to the original pattern and command in the word of God. You will, therefore, baptize no person, but upon a creditable profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as "the Son of God." Persons giving you a satisfactory evidence of their love to, and faith in Christ, and requiring baptism, you will "bury with Christ in baptism, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," according to Christ's command, after his resurrection from the dead.

You will likewise administer the Lord's Supper to those churches where Providence may at any time direct you, in the manner instituted by Christ, for his visible followers.

However "the fields may be white, ready to the harvest," and faithful labourers may be few,

and it is our duty and privilege to pray that labourers might be put into the vineyard, yet we are enjoined to "lay hands suddenly on no man." We ought to have some rational evidence that they are the "called of God as was Aaron," before we give our approbation to their taking upon them the office-work of a minister. The language of the Apostle Paul confirms this sentiment. "Some men's sins are open before hand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after. Likewise, also, the good works of some are manifest before-hand, and they that are otherwise cannot be hid."

Again: "Take heed to thyself as well as thy doctrine." And "be thou an example to the believers in word, in conversation, in charity." It may appear almost superfluous to observe, that an exemplary life is essential, to give weight to the Christian Ministry. It is a holy and correspondent walk, which enforces upon the minds of the hearers the sublime truths of our holy religion. An ungodly, careless, and licentious preacher "prostitutes his noble office," and brings reproach upon the religion he vainly pretends to preach. Real religion inculcates a pleasing medium between the extremes of a vain, careless and trifling deportment, and the sour moroseness and asperity of the Ascetic. "The

wisdom from above is pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

Finally: "I charge thee, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things. Do the work of an Evangelist. Make full proof of thy ministry.

In closing this address, you will permit me to remark, that from my long acquaintance with you, which has knit our hearts in Christian love, I rejoice in your taking part with us in this ministry. Now, dear Brother, "I commend you to God, and the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them who are sanctified;" sincerely praying that you may be increasingly useful in the blessed cause of your Redeemer—that you may be truly "faithful to the death," and that, after your toils in the church militant, you may receive a crown of life and glory, in the church triumphant.

AMEN.

FELLOWSHIP.

BY

THE REV. JOHN WILLIAMS.

WHILE we attend to the solemnities of this day, we are called to witness the faithfulness of our glorious Immanuel, who ascended on high, and gave gifts unto men. "He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Extraordinary gifts have ceased in the church in our day: but our Lord is ever faithful to his promise, and will give unto his people "pastors after his own heart, who shall feed them with knowledge and understanding."

The part of the work which is allotted to me, on the present occasion, is *to give the right hand of fellowship*. This practice was used by the primitive christians, as a token of brotherly affection and esteem for each other in the Lord. The glory of our holy religion is displayed in the method of Grace, which recovers lost sinners from their awful apostasy and ruin, to enjoy fellowship with God as a covenant father, thro' the mediation of Jesus. In the divine plan, all the perfections of God shine to the astonishment of elect angels and redeemed sinners: The saints are reconciled to God, made partakers of his image, and brought into the enjoyment of a glorious communion with God.

Such is the honour conferred on guilty worms, that God, in very deed, dwells with men on the earth, and will raise the subjects of his grace, to enjoy everlasting fellowship with himself in glory. The saints have fellowship with one another in the truth; being made partakers of the same spirit, they cannot but love all who bear the image of God, as brethren in Christ Jesus. Mutual acquaintance with each others state of mind, and a relation of the work of Grace in the soul, are well calculated to increase their love and christian affection.

This pleasure some of us enjoyed this morning, while our Brother, now set apart for the work of the ministry, gave a satisfactory relation of the work of grace in his soul, and of his call to the ministry of the word, and a declaration of his faith.—In token of love and christian affection, my dear Brother, I give you *the right hand of fellowship*; praying that the Lord of the harvest may grant you much of his presence in your soul, support under all your trials, and great success in that all-important work in which you have engaged. May you have the pleasure to see many sinners turned from darkness to light, under your ministry, and the flock of Christ built up in their most holy faith. And finally, may an entrance be ministred unto you abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ,

AMEN.